2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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PREFACE

This reconstruction of Gros Ventre life as it had been lived before the disappearance of the buffalo around 1884 is the result of a joint undertaking. When the late Dr. John M. Cooper visited the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1938, he met there a group of older men who were interested in having him cooperate with them in the making of a record of their "old way of life." The project was then undertaken and continued by Dr. Cooper in the summers of 1939 and 1940. It was upon the invitation of the Gros Ventres that I went to the Reservation in 1940 to work with the women and to deal mainly with matters other than the religious aspects of their culture. Pressure of other duties, combined with ill-health, prevented Dr. Cooper's return to the field after 1940, but the taking of the record was subsequently continued by me in the summers of 1945 and 1948.

The results are presented in two parts, Part I on Social Life is the more general, giving a background for Part II which deals exclusively with Religion. The writing of Part II had been practically completed by Dr. Cooper at the time of his death in 1949; it will appear as a separate volume under his name.

It is my privilege to thank all of the Gros Ventres who cooperated in the taking of the record. In 1945 and in 1948 preliminary drafts of the material were checked and revised in the field. In spite of all precautions it is not unlikely that some errors may remain. For these the Gros Ventres themselves are in no way responsible. The onus, especially for any misrepresentation of the Gros Ventre point of view, must rest entirely on us.

While Dr. Cooper financed his own field work, I am indebted to the Charles and Grace E. Lastner Fund for part of my field expense in 1940 and in 1945, and to the Research Fund of The Catholic University of America, for the grant which enabled me to return to the Fort Belknap Reservation for the summer of 1948.

To the School Sisters of St. Francis, who at no small inconvenience to themselves accommodated my husband and me at St. Paul's School, we are deeply grateful. We wish likewise to